

March 3, 2025
To Joint Committee on Transportation:

I am writing to remain neutral on HB 3362. My comments are in regards that the Bill provides funding but has a lack of accountability in meeting goals and performance measures for habitat mitigation, enhancement, and restoration. I have recently meet with ODFW staff (about 10 days ago) to discuss this concern as they currently underway to revise the Oregon Conservation Strategy. In our discussion, goals and performance measures where not a part of their process either. Though I am supportive of seeking money for these causes, it must be pointed out with a lack of a consistent approach to inventory assessment and monitoring results in a lack of clarity and accountability in reaching Department and Legislative goals. This critical piece needs to be written into these (and other) legislation that address habitat mitigation and enhancement.

To follow, I have included a Fact Sheet about our approach that list the books that have been developed and the Science Reviews it has undergone. It meets the standard of “Best Available Science”. One specific fact that is relative to this situation is, we worked with ODFW and ODOT to develop a single species accounting/crediting system for the Oregon Chub (see Fisheries Vol 35 No 6, June 2010). In 2014, the Oregon Chub was the first endangered fish species to be delisted in the U.S. Also, ODFW and Bonneville Power Administration have used the approach to reach a 15 year \$150 million dollar settlement for the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation. Additionally, the Corps of Engineers has also used the approach on a number of their projects that helped them access nearly \$1 billion dollars of public funding. Finally, Grand Ronde tribe has also use the approach for several years.

If you have any questions, or if you would like to setup a time to meet about this matter, please let me know.

Very Best,

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THI: The Habitat Institute (THI) is a 501(c)3 non-profit scientific and education organization dedicated to promoting and disseminating the best available information about the native and invasive fish and wildlife species and their habitats through the development of data-rich and verifiable information, maps, and tools.

IBIS: The Integrated Biodiversity Information System (IBIS) contains information gathered and compiled during the past 25 years on over 800 fish and wildlife species in Oregon. The information compiled relates to species occurrences, habitat relationships, key environmental correlates, potential influence of management activities, life histories, key ecological functions, and associations with salmonids. This Information is peer-reviewed scientific data that are displayed in text, tables, figures, and maps.

CHAP The Combined Habitat Assessment Protocols (CHAP) as a framework for conservation planning across the western United States. Its methodology establishes a habitat value based on assessment(s) that use IBIS species, habitat, and functions data. It determines habitat quality by using consistent definitions, data collection, mapping standards to inventory an area of interest. The CHAP approach can account and track the triad of components (species, habitat, and functions) to establish an appraised habitat value. The habitat value produced by CHAP is a major improvement over older methods because it is the first approach that relies on a biological accounting system. CHAP, which is fundamentally a spatial approach, can integrate other inventory data with GIS data along with other datasets.

Objective:

- To make a complete, comprehensive and consistent fish and wildlife information system for Oregon and other western states. This system could support state, counties, watershed planners, natural resource managers, and schools. This system can complement existing regional programs like statewide or regional planning.

Facts:

- IBIS information was used to develop the first Oregon Wildlife-Habitat Map, and in two key publications: *Wildlife-Habitat Relationships in Oregon and Washington* and the *Atlas of Oregon Wildlife*, both published by Oregon State University Press and the Northwest Habitat Institute. Note: The Wildlife-Habitat Relationship book has been accepted into the Smithsonian Institution;
- IBIS data sets was developed in collaboration with approximately 40 natural resource organizations, involving over 700 natural resource people.
- CHAP was used by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to obtain a \$150-million-dollar settlement with Bonneville Power Administration for Wildlife Mitigation in the Willamette Valley payable over 10-years (2015-2025); Corps has used CHAP to access over 1 billion in public funding for their projects.
- CHAP has passed 8 independent reviews that include a National Academy of Sciences Independent Scientific Review Panel sponsored by the Bonneville Power Administration and a National Academy of Sciences Model Review Panel sponsored by the Corps of Engineers (\$200k); Thus, meeting a standard for “Best Available Science”.
- CHAP was used by the Northwest Power Planning Council as its primary wildlife information source for Subbasin Planning for the Columbia River Basin from 2004-2012; whereby the wildlife portion of the program was concluded;

Our Request:

- To work collaboratively with the Oregon’s Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Transportation, and Watershed Enhancement Board to incorporate CHAP and IBIS into their current statewide assessment and monitoring systems, thereby giving clarity, consistency, and accountability in reaching Department and Legislative goals.